

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 SSM-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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O 211353Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6953
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS CAIRO 08927

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PBOR PEPR MILI UNSC EG IS LE
SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION

SUMMARY. PRESS PROMINENTLY COVERS FIGHTING IN SOUTH LEBANON, NOTING CONTINUED ISRAELI OPERATIONS EVEN AFTER PASSAGE OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION. COMMENTARIES PICK UP SAME THEME, NOTING ALSO BEGIN REFUSAL TO WITHDRAW UNTIL GUARANTEE OF PALESTINIAN NON-RETURN TO SOUTH LEBANON. COMMENTARIES EMPHASIZE NECESSITY FOR IMMEDIATE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL UNDER TERMS OF "AMERICAN-SPONSORED" UNSC RESOLUTION. QUESTION REMAINS HOW MUCH PRESSURE U.S. WILL BRING TO BEAR ON ISRAEL? END SUMMARY.
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1. ALL PAPERS MARCH 21 REPORT THAT DESPITE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION, ISRAELI MILITARY OPERATIONS STILL BEING CONDUCTED, WITH IDF ESTABLISHING FOOTHOLD ON THE LITANI RIVER. "SAVAGE" FIGHTING CONTINUING BETWEEN IDF AND ISRAEL; ATTEMPTS TO TAKE TYRE BY LAND, SEA AND AIR ATTACKS "FRUSTRATED" BY STIFF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE.

SAME ARTICLES QUOTE BEGIN STATEMENT IN NEW YORK THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT WITHDRAW FROM SOUTH LEBANON UNTIL GUARANTEE PALESTINIAN FORCES WILL NOT RETURN. PAPERS CITE "POLITICAL OBSERVERS" IN WASHINGTON AS SAYING NEW DIFFERENCES HAVE CROPPED UP BETWEEN U.S. AND ISRAEL ON LEBANON. UN FORCES REPORTEDLY BEGINNING TO ARRIVE.

2. IN CONTEXT OF LEBANESE STORIES, PRESS CLAIMS SPLIT IN REJECTION FRONT DEVELOPED DURING DAMASCUS MEETING OF FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS. SYRIAN AND ALGERIAN DELEGATES SUPPOSEDLY ARGUED IT NECESSARY TAKE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS NEW INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. REPRESENTATIVES OF LIBYA AND SOUTH YEMEN CONTINUED UN-CONDITIONAL SUPPORT OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE. PLO SPOKESMAN ABU MAYZAR QUOTED AS SAYING PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT APPROVE SENDING UN FORCES TO SOUTH LEBANON. LOCAL PAPERS SAY ARAB PRESS HAS ATTACKED REJECTIONISTS FOR FAILURE TRANSLATE THEIR STAND INTO PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIANS.

3. COMMENTARY. EDITORIALY AHRAH COUPLES CONTINUING ISRAELI OPERATIONS WITH BEGIN'S EXPRESSION OF DOUBT RE EFFECTIVENESS OF UN FORCES. MOST URGENT QUESTION VIEWED AS IMMEDIATE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL UNDER TERMS OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION. AKHBAR PLAYS SAME TUNE, ACCUSING ISRAEL OF USING SOUTH LEBANON AS CARD IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S. EFFORT, SAYS AKHBAR, FRUSTRATED BY PALESTINIAN UNCLASSIFIED

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RESISTANCE AND U.S.-SPONSORED UNSC RESOLUTION. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES BY QUESTIONING WHETHER ISRAEL WILL NOW DEFER TO U.S., "ON WHICH IT TOTALLY DEPENDS," AND "HOW MUCH PRESSURE IS PRESIDENT CARTER READY TO BRING ON ISRAEL?" EILTS

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TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, MILI, SOPN, EG, IS, LE, UNSC, UNIFIL
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